

# THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.

NO. XLV.

---

BOSTON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1840.

---

## BIOGRAPHY.

### BEETHOVEN.

[TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH FOR THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.]

Louis van Beethoven, a distinguished composer of the nineteenth century, was one of those rare men whose name is the characteristic mark of an entire epoch of art and science—a kind of phenomenon of which nature is sparing, and which seldom makes its appearance. Of such men it cannot always be known what they are from the earliest period of their lives; the power of invention does not manifest itself in their first attempts, and it is not, as is generally thought, a necessary condition of their genius that it should exhibit itself in the cradle. Genius is capricious because it is genius—its progress is not uniform; at one time it displays itself suddenly full of spirit and fire—at another time we see it developed gradually, or even languishing for a long time as if paralyzed by indolence. Mozart when an infant and hardly able to speak, had created a great sensation; but the genius of Beethoven, notwithstanding his far-spread fame, does not appear to have attracted particular notice during his earlier years; for M. Baden, of Bonn, who was a playmate and schoolfellow of the great artist, relates that the father of Beethoven was obliged to use violence to make him commence the study of music, and that

there were but few days when a whipping was not necessary to compel him to apply himself to the piano. This fact, which, considering the source whence it comes, seems deserving of credit, is in direct opposition to the assertion of biographers, especially of M. Seyfried in his account at the commencement of his edition of the studies of Beethoven upon harmony and counterpoint, and also of Schlosser in his life of this great musician. M. Baden, however, agrees with these writers as to the rapidity of Beethoven's progress—for, after his first distaste had been overcome, he conceived a passion for the art which he had been compelled to study, and advanced with giant strides in a career where compulsion alone had been able to conduct him. What would have been the result if, being left to his own inclination, he had been at liberty to choose his own time?—a singular question, in which the imagination may encounter the strangest hypotheses.

The birth of Beethoven has given rise to ill-founded conjectures and rumors. The authors of the *Dictionary of Musicians* (Paris, 1810,) say that he was believed to be the natural son of Frederic William II, King of Prussia; but the fact is that his father, Theodore Van Beethoven, was a tenor in the chapel of the elector of Cologne. Others have maintained that he was a Hollander, because the particle *Van* is joined to his name; but it is most probable that the father of Beethoven was a native of Maestricht, where there are still some families of the name of Van Beethoven. However this may be, the illustrious artist was born at Bonn, upon the Rhine, although there is even to this day some uncertainty as to the year. M. Seyfried says that it was the 17th of December, 1770—Gerber, Schlosser, the *Conversations-Lexicon*, and all other biographers say that it was in 1772, but without mentioning the particular day. Beethoven always said that he was born on the 16th of December 1772, and attributed the record of baptism bearing date December 17th, 1770, to an elder brother who died in infancy, and who was named *Louis* as well as himself. M. Seyfried, who knew this fact and relates it, does so in order to fix the before-mentioned date as the true one, without making known to us the grounds of his conviction in this respect. I can, however, remove all doubts on this subject as M. Simrock, of Bonn, has, at my request, examined the records of that city and arrived at the following result—1st, that the celebrated composer *Louis Van Beethoven* was born on the 17th of December, 1770—2d, that the elder brother, of whom he speaks, and who was also called *Louis*,

was born on the 2d of April, 1769, and died on the 8th of the same month—3d, that no other child of the name of *Beethoven* was born in 1772—4th, that the other children of Theodore Van Beethoven were *Nicholas-John*, born the 2d of October, 1776, *Anne-Catherine*, born the 23d of February, 1779, and *Francis-George*, born the 17th of January, 1781.\*

Beethoven was five years old when his father taught him the first principles of music and gave him as an instructer on the piano Vander Eden, the organist of the Court. The means of Theodore Van Beethoven were too limited for him to pay for an instructer for his son; but Vander Eden, with true disinterestedness, offered to give lessons to him whose future fame he did not then foresee. He could devote but little time to the studies of the child, but the great exertion he was himself compelled to make supplied the want of instruction. Scarcely a year had been spent in these preliminary studies when a passionate taste for music suddenly developed itself in Beethoven; and from this time, instead of exciting it was in some degree necessary to restrain his ardor—his progress became a source of astonishment. In 1782 Vander Eden died, and his place as organist of the Court was supplied by Neefe, a man of talents, to whom the elector Maximilian of Austria entrusted the care of continuing the musical education of Beethoven; for this child had already attracted the public attention, although he had attained but his twelfth year. Neefe was not slow to discern the genius of his pupil, and he conceived it his duty to initiate him without delay into the sublime conceptions of Bach and Handel, instead of exhausting his patience upon compositions of an inferior order, as Vander Eden had done, with the intention, as it seemed, of developing only the child's talent of execution. The sublime works of these two great men excited the imagination of the young artist, and inspired him with an admiration for them which was never diminished, and which, towards the end of his life, resembled a sort of adoration. His skill in executing these difficult compositions was so great even at twelve years of age, that he played in

\* A singular fact again presents itself here. The will which Beethoven made in 1802 has this inscription—*For my brothers Charles and N. Beethoven*; but we see by the extract from the record of births that no one of the children of Theodore Beethoven was named *Charles*. Some unknown circumstance had undoubtedly occurred to give to *Francis-George* the name of *Charles* in the family, although it did not belong to him.

a very rapid movement the fugues and preludes from the collection of John Sebastian Bach, known by the name of *Clavecin bien tempéré*. An irresistible instinct now urged him on towards composition—the fruits of which precocious desire were some variations upon a march, three sonatas for the piano, and some dancing tunes. But no knowledge of the laws of harmony had thus far been given to Beethoven; inaccuracies, incoherence of ideas, abrupt modulations and disorder prevailed at that time in his works, which were published at Spire and Manheim under the care of Neefe, and which, being afterwards disgusted with their defects, he disavowed, and recognised as his first work only his trios for the piano, printed at Vienna. Being at this period of his life more skilled in the art of extemporizing than in that of writing, he threw into his graceful fantasies a richness of imagination which astonished all who heard them—and Gerber (*Neues Lex. der Tonkunstler*) relates that, while yet quite young, he excited the admiration of the composer, Junker, when extemporizing before him at Cologne. But there is a much more remarkable instance of his talent in this respect. In 1790, he made a short excursion to Vienna to hear Mozart, of whose music he was passionately fond, and to whom he had letters of recommendation. On account of what was said of him in these letters, Mozart invited Beethoven to sit at the piano, where he began to extemporize; but the great artist listened with indifference, persuaded that what he heard had been committed to memory. Offended by this neglect, Beethoven requested Mozart to give him a subject. "Very well," said the master softly, "but I am going to catch you;" he immediately gave him the subject of a chromatic fugue, which, being performed by a retrograde movement, contained a counter-subject for a double fugue. Beethoven, although but little advanced in the science, suspected the snare which had been laid for him; but he varied this theme during three quarters of an hour with such power, originality and genius, that his auditor, having become more attentive and confounded by what he heard, arose, and holding his breath, went on tip-toe to an adjoining room, where he said in a low voice to some friends who were there—"Observe this young man! you will hear him spoken of some day."

Beethoven exhibited no less talent for the organ than for the piano; on which account the elector thought of making him the successor of Neefe, and immediately gave him (in 1791) the title of honorary organist to the court, with an annuity to enable him to go

to Vienna to complete his musical studies under the direction of Joseph Haydn. This was in 1793, at which time Beethoven was more than twenty-two years old—he possessed a remarkable talent for execution, and his genius already announced his power; but he had only confused notions of the art of writing. Haydn saw at the first glance all that was necessary to be done to complete his studies in counterpoint, which were then scarcely commenced, but he was not able to undertake it himself, for he was soon called to London to compose the twelve grand symphonies which are considered his most celebrated works. He therefore entrusted the young artist to the care of his friend Albrechtsberger, master of the chapel, and at that time the most learned professor in Germany. There is something curious and worthy of observation in seeing an imagination so vigorous and fanciful consigned to the scholastic rigor of the strictest and severest musician in Vienna; and at twenty-two years of age, with an imperfect musical education and a thirst for invention, he was but ill suited to devote himself exclusively to preceptive studies like that of counterpoint. An æsthetic and rational course of study was the only one which it had been possible to employ with success; and unfortunately there was but little philosophy combined with the true knowledge of Albrechtsberger, whose method was wholly traditional and empirical, and who, although he well understood the authority of the school, could not without difficulty find the basis of that authority. He therefore applied to Beethoven his ordinary course of progressive studies, which are excellent for very young pupils, but which, in the education of a young man at twenty years of age, require some modification. It is curious to observe in Beethoven's studies of harmony, and counterpoint, which have been published, the struggle between his perseverance in learning the rules, and his imagination which leads him to infringe them. He had, however, an inclination for scientific forms; and it may be perceived in a thousand parts of his works, that he loved to make use of them, although he had begun too late to understand their construction, and to put them in practice.

During the first part of his stay at Vienna, Beethoven attracted the attention of the public by his talent at execution and improvisation—he passed at that time for a pianist of the first order, and it was said that he had no rival. But in the latter part of the eighteenth century, one appeared who was worthy to compete with him—this was Woelfl, who afterwards went to Paris, where his talents have

been appreciated but by a small number of connoisseurs. M. de Seyfried thus expresses himself respecting this rivalry—" We here see renewed, in a manner, the old French quarrel of the Gluckists and Piccinists. The numerous amateurs of the imperial city divided themselves into two adverse parties. At the head of the partisans of Beethoven figured the worthy and amiable Prince Lichnowsky ; while one of the most ardent supporters of Woelfl was the Baron Raymond of Welzslar, whose charming villa (situated at Grunberg, near the imperial chateau of Schoenbrunn) offered to all national or foreign artists, during the pleasant season, a delightful retreat, where they met a reception full of the frankness and enjoyment of precious liberty. It was there that the interesting rivalry of the two competitors frequently furnished a lively entertainment to a numerous but select company. Each one carried thither his newest compositions, and each there gave himself up without reserve to the inspirations of his genius. Sometimes they seated themselves at the same time at two pianos, and extemporised alternately upon a given theme, or executed a capriccio for four hands, which if they could have written as well as they composed it, would undoubtedly have gained a long existence."

" With respect to mechanical skill, it was difficult, perhaps impossible to adjudge the palm to either of the rivals, although nature had dealt favorably with Woelfl in giving him hands of such prodigious size that he reached tenths as easily as others could reach octaves, and could execute with both hands long passages of this interval with the rapidity of lightning. Beethoven, from that time, made known his *penchant* for the sombre and mysterious ; sometimes he plunged into a grand and powerful harmony, and then he seemed to have said adieu to the earth ; his spirit had broken all its bonds, shaken off every kind of servitude, and raised itself triumphantly into the regions of the air. Suddenly, his playing roared like a foaming cataract, and the artist forced his instrument to utter strange sounds ; then it became calm again, breathing nothing but sighs, and expressing nothing but sadness ; and finally, his soul took flight again, free from all human passions, to seek pure consolation from on high, and dazzled itself with pious melodies." " In writing, Beethoven did not make use of that boldness of conception which was so striking in his improvisations. Not that he wanted originality, for he certainly exhibited much in his trios for the piano, violin and violoncello, and in his first sonatas for the piano ; but

subjected as it was to the control of a boundless admiration for the works of Mozart, the influence of this passion and the transport of his individuality were kept within the bounds which were fixed by the exquisite taste of his model. This desire of imitation, which manifests itself in the boldest genius, is, at the dawn of talent less rare than we imagine ; and it is undoubtedly to a consciousness of this desire, where it is found in the works which have been quoted and in his first quatuors, that we are to attribute the disgust which Beethoven felt for these productions towards the end of his life—a disgust, which an artist, who visited him in 1833, informs us was so strong as to excite his temper whenever any one spoke to him in praise of his works—for he loved those only in which he had, in the latter part of his life, given free scope to all the fancies of his imagination.” (*Harmonicon*, vol. ii. part i. p. 10.)

The war which disturbed Germany, and the death of the elector of Cologne, in 1801, deprived Beethoven both of the hope of a situation at the electoral court and of the pension which had for a long time furnished him with the means of subsistence ; these circumstances added to his accustomed sadness, and increased his disrelish for society. His desire of solitude had begun to manifest itself in 1796, the time when he perceived the first approach of that deafness which resisted all applications, and which continued to increase without cessation until at last it entirely deprived him of the pleasure of hearing music. His two brothers had followed him to Vienna, and undertook the management of his affairs, giving him full liberty to occupy himself in nothing but his art. In a will which he made in 1802, in favor of these two brothers, it may be seen that he had begun to despair since the unfortunate accident which deprived him of his hearing, that he had avoided the world because he did not dare to acknowledge his deafness, and that he had many times been near attempting to take his own life, in order to put an end to his mental anguish. He viewed his infirmity as dishonorable for a musician, and declared that to be obliged to reveal the secret of it caused him the deepest melancholy. “ My art alone has restrained me,” he says (in this writing which M. Seyfried has made known to us), “ for it seems to me impossible to leave the world before having produced every thing which I feel that I ought. Thus it is that I continue this miserable, oh ! very miserable life, with a temperament so nervous that a trifle can transport me from the happiest to the most wretched state of existence.”

Nevertheless the fame of Beethoven began to increase, and his fine works of instrumental music were now in the hands of all artists and distinguished amateurs. The author of these works being engaged with Salieri, and in his conversations with him, having obtained instruction in dramatic music, his friends all urged him to write an opera, and he finally yielded to their requests. Souleithner, a counsellor of the regency, was entrusted with the care of arranging for the theatre of Vienna *Leonora*, after the manner of the French piece formerly set to music by Gaveaux. Beethoven then took rooms in the theatre, and applied himself to the labor with that ardor which he carried to every thing pertaining to his art, the object of his love. At this period of his life the individuality of his talent began to be strongly developed. The opera of *Leonora*, now better known as *Fidelio*, and which to this day enjoys great celebrity, was not at first successful; for an execution worse than indifferent could not render intelligible those profound ideas which abound in this original work, which, in relation to its dramatic arrangement, was not altogether protected from censure. Beethoven afterwards wrote for the Prague theatre a new overture, less difficult than the first, but which was not published until after his death. The first representation of *Leonora* was in 1805; but the gradual approach of the scene of war, and finally the occupation of Vienna by the French, contributed not a little to the ill success of this work. In the course of the following year, however, the directors of the theatre of *Karnthnerthor* selected *Fidelio* for a representation at their benefit, when the work assumed the form which it now has. It was originally in three acts, but was afterwards reduced to two, and preceded by an overture in *E* major which has taken the place of that of *Leonora*. This overture was not performed at the first representation of the piece, and it was necessary to supply its place by the overture of the *Ruins of Athens*. At this reproduction of his opera, Beethoven composed that original little march in the first act, the stanzas of the gaoler and the first finale; but he also composed a trio full of melody (in *E* flat major) and a delightful duet for a soprano voice with violin and violoncello concertant (in *C* major) which are not contained in the part that has been published. *Fidelio*, the overtures and interludes of the *Ruins of Athens* and *Prometheus, Coriolanus*, and *Egmont*, are all that Beethoven has written for the theatre. In 1823 he commenced the opera of *Melusine*, the poetry of which was by Grillparzer, but he does not appear to have continued this work.

[To be continued.]

## HOW HAS SHAKSPEARE CONCEIVED THE NATURE AND VALUE OF MUSIC?

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF FRANZ HORN.

In great suffering of mind, man remains silent, for *speech* does not dare to intrude, where the Medusa head of fate approaches too near. But *Music* steps in, in these cases, often with more decided victory. This art is of so rich a value, that even the richest language is earlier exhausted. But when the poet is also a musician—and the true poet must always have the feelings of the musician, however little he knows of the practice, music must be in his soul—he will accomplish wonders, of which the mere reflecting mind has no idea. There has never been a poet, that has had a better conception of this value of music and has made better application of it than Shakspeare;—a position which it would be profitable to develope and prove more *in extenso*. I give here only a few hints on the subject.

Romeo and Juliet is so entirely music in itself, that external music added might be not only superfluous, but even hindering. Who does not hear in that charming night of love the nightingale on the pomegranate tree, and the announcer of day, the warbling lark, forestalling the morning air? Nay, if any one intended to produce the severest satire against the favorite way of too commodiously assisting the imagination by excessive brilliancy of decorations and the arts of the machinist, he need only bring out in that scene a real nightingale and make it sing its best strains. There is, however, in this piece some external music, but as it were only as a counterbalance to the delicate internal music, I mean the brilliant dancing music at the masked ball. Only the excellent Peter in his grand simplicity asks for more; and since he cannot have more, he, always penetrating to the bottom of a thing, wants at least to have it explained, why the poet has it: "Music with its silver sound."

In Hamlet, music is sometimes actually introduced, and with much effect; mocking at the words "For, O, for, O, the hobbyhorse is forgot," at the words "For thou dost know, O Damon dear," &c.—deeply touching and sad in the fragments of love in Ophelia's madness—dreadfully gay and laughing and scornful the whole words

with the grave-digger. The shrill trumpet blast at the sumptuous meal of the king in the upper rooms of the castle, this gay concord of tones, preceding the apparition of the ghost, who comes to unfold the secret to Hamlet, is also in character. (In Schiller's *Robbers* also, this often misunderstood work of a giant in imagination, inestimable in spite of all its faults, the tones of horns precede the dreadful scene at the tower.)

Music, withal, belongs entirely to the *world of spirits*. The witches in Macbeth, have, no doubt, *sung* under Shakspeare's own direction, and the series of kings of Banquo's line, will not have passed without music. When in a poet's fiction, the world of spirits steps into our earthly world, the imagination will often hardly enter into it, unless music introduces it; for instance, in Julius Cæsar, where, after the boy Lucius has fallen asleep at his flute playing and with his flute, the spirit of the murdered Julius appears to the greater Brutus.

Timon abuses music as a mere art for the dinner table; he regales his guests with music at dinner. But music revenges itself on him, by leaving him, just when he needs its influence most. When he is torn by the most dreadful misanthropy, not a single chord is faithful to him, and speech alone is left him, to vent his full curses on the whole family of men.

The grand, comprehensive—sometimes even painful satire on the whole life and doings of this world in the play of Troilus and Cressida, a play that is almost always misunderstood, but contains, as it were, a paraphrase of Hamlet's

“ How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,  
Seem to me all the uses of this world ! ”

it does not bear music, and the voluptuousness in the relations of the lovers, as well as the witty wickedness of Pandarus, might be considered as mockery of all higher music.

In the great drama of Lear, the singing of the fool is very effective, and without it, the dreadful scenes with his basilisk daughters might almost be insufferable. This singing, and all external music, must however stand back, when at last the curse, that is to last forever, is pronounced. Nature, herself, appears here as a living person, for no man having the power or the courage, to take care of the abandoned old king, she rings herself the great alarm bell of the tempest, and gives by the rolling of the thunder and the hissing of the lightning, the only music, which is adapted to it. At the end, when the king

wakes up from the slumber of madness, in the beautiful scene with Cordelia, music is again brought in, as a remedy for the king.

In Othello, the harshest and most dreadful of all tragedies, music heightens the witty shudder (I cannot find a better word for the feeling) that seizes us in the scene in the guardhouse; when the otherwise so brave and steady Cassius is by a little *fauz pas*, obeying "the devil drunkenness," brought into a strange, hostile element, and the gay tones of the song of old "King Stephen," have almost a tragic effect. It is curious, that this same Cassius, on whom music and wine played so bad a trick, looks to her for help, when sober, to reconcile the offended general. But he has made the mistake, not to take musicians to the morning serenade, which he brings Othello, but only unskilful unfeeling tyros, and the witty clown comes immediately running out of the palace, and begs them for God's sake to desist; or, if they have "any music, that may not be heard" to go to it again.

In the comedy of "Twelfth Night or What you Will," music appears in the most varied relations; for the duke, intoxicated with poetry, it is a deep cool stream, in which he floats with all his fantastic joys and sufferings, his feelings and imaginations—for the two gentlemen, a sound amusement, which heightens the pleasures of the table and the joke—for the clown, it is a wanton game, that might become dangerous to a less robust nature. He is the same, that brings all the neighborhood in despair by singing the canon with the drunken Sir Andrew and Sir Toby, while soon after, he affects the inmost heart of the duke, who is sighing in sweet melancholy, by singing the beautiful song :

"Come away, come away, death."

It is clear, that he, knowing neither of love sickness or health, is ironical with the duke; yet certainly not with that song, and the musical composition which its spirit, requires.

In the incomparable comedy of "As you Like it," music, as it were, never ceases, except at the court of the poor, sober, usurper. But it is at home, in the green shades of the forest, and on the airy height of the cheerful mountains, where the noble, lawful duke has erected his throne, and you cannot proceed a step in this sweet comedy, without meeting the most diversified internal and external music. Sweet songs of love, vary with witty parodies of romance, or with gay sounds of horns and hunting songs, and the whole appears as

the cheerful temple of love and music. Seriousness is so deep and yet so childlike, gayety so pert and yet so unaffected, that we feel the most happy union of poetry and music has been accomplished here.

The same may be said of the "Tempest" and the "Summer Night's Dream." All is here harmonious and we feel that joy, which best likes sweet, harmonious sounds, and thus we have every where verse and no prose.

In Richard II. music is not only a soother for the sufferings of the imprisoned king, but his most effective *teacher*. What he has so long neglected—*measure*—is made wholly intelligible to him for the first time by a good musical composition, badly played, striking his ear. He has withstood the wise counsels of his better friends, and the terrible earnest of the dying Gaunt, but he cannot withstand the simple reflection, which the abused music forces upon him, and in the injured proportions in the measure of the tones he finds his own life indicated.

I pass by several other dramas of the inexhaustible poet, to enter a little more into particulars with the far-famed "Merchant of Venice." With Shakspeare the formation and the tone of the language is always characteristic in each individual, and you will never find a noble, exalted character speaking in negligent, broken up, or unmusical language, unless it be in moments, when the poet wants to show that the internal music has left that person. This is most evidently shown in the "Merchant of Venice," where the different languages resolve themselves at the end into the most beautiful harmony. Antonio's language is melodious, sweet, and simple as his life. Graziano's pertness shows itself even in the rough form of his language, while that of Bassanio in its freshly moving, bold music, exhibits his daring, manly pride; Shylock likes dissonances in all their relations, he seeks to catch rough, dimly sounding, sharp words; and the "vile squeaking of the wry-neck'd fife," which he gives to his daughter as a sign when it would be time to lock doors and windows, appears to have been his own favorite music. While Bassanio comments to himself on his decisive choice of the caskets, music is again introduced, for the poet, like his fair creature, Portia, wants that music should magically bring about and play round this decision, be it to eternal sorrow or to loving joy. The whole of the last act of this play seems to be woven together of music, flower scents, moonlight, and light jests.

What Lorenzo says of music, has traveled over the whole civilized world ; and his "the man that has no music in his soul," &c. can only alarm *those*, who *need* such an alarm, to be excited to conceive their previous confusion and listlessness, and for whom this alarm is necessary to mend their ways. They cannot be called harsh or severe against those unfortunate beings, who have no music within themselves ; and it is well known that Plato judges similarly.

---

**MR. GEORGE J. WEBB.**

We are very sorry, and not less surprised, to perceive that the friends of Mr. Geo. J. Webb have so far misunderstood our remarks about this gentleman in the last number of the Musical Magazine, as to charge us with directly censuring him, as the cause of the troubles which we mentioned in connexion with him, and thus with wronging and injuring him.

They are mistaken, and we think will be satisfied of it on calmly rereading our article. We were speaking of the Report of the Boston Academy of Music, and always in reference to that, let them bear that in mind. Mr. Webb's resignation as professor of the Academy last winter was very sudden and unexpected, although it had been bruited about that there had been differences between him and Mr. Mason. No further explanation was given at the time, and the first public notice which has come to our knowledge is contained in this annual report of the Academy. And how does this report notice it ?—Why, naming only Mr. Webb as one of the parties interested in these differences, after stating that they had cost the Academy much trouble and delay, and nearly spoiled the whole season ; and saying, that they led to Mr. Webb's resignation, which on the whole they could do no better than accept, although unwilling to lose his services.

By this we must understand, that the government of the Academy meant to convey the idea that Mr. Webb was in the wrong ; otherwise there would no doubt be some explanation, why, although they did *not* think Mr. Webb wrong, they thought it on the whole better to accept his resignation ; or else there would be inconsistency. Thus, from this Report, considered by itself, the natural conclusion is a prejudice against Mr. Webb ; and it being far and wide spread,

and under the authority of a celebrated institution, we thought Mr. Webb's own reputation required a more explicit statement of the case.

This we meant to express, and no more; and we are astonished that more has been inferred from our remarks. We have not in the least presumed to judge ourselves, nor could we do so, for ourselves have not yet been enabled to make an impartial examination into the affair, and form an unbiased opinion of its merits.

We are rejoiced to hear that *all* those, who know Mr. Webb, entertain no prejudice against him, for we too have always held Mr. Webb in just esteem as a gentleman and as a musician; but this Report reaches many, who know him only as one of the Academy's professors, and with them it is calculated to create a prejudice against him, and we would not wish to see him deprived of one jot of that influence upon our musical development, which he is qualified to exert, if it can be prevented.

We made our remarks, we must candidly confess, from a feeling of disappointment, that the Report touched so lightly upon these dissensions. If it was necessary at all to mention them, and we believe it was so, in order to explain the difficulties against which the Academy had to contend in the fore part of the season, it appears to us, that it was also necessary to enter into an impartial examination of the whole, or at least to explain, the alleged reasons of the step taken, and those which actuated the government of the Academy to accept Mr. Webb's resignation. For, we repeat, we cannot consider these dissensions as a mere private matter between two individuals. They risked a check on the progress of music, for a while at least. It is vain also to say, that the dissensions and final separation of two men who had been hitherto considered conjointly as the pioneers, under the auspices of the Academy of Music, of popular musical education among us, should not cause parties in music; especially when we cannot deny, that, from whatever quarter or quarters it may be, exertions are made to widen the chasm, and separate still farther the adherents to either party.

But we will stop here, and only again repeat, do not suffer the cause of music to be injured or checked. If it must be so, bring the matter at once to a just issue at the bar of the public; if this is not necessary, then show that you have one great object in view, the spreading and familiarizing of your noble art, and that you can co-operate in the cause.

We will however improve this opportunity plainly and candidly to state our position, that it may be understood and appreciated. Our sympathies are strongly in favor of the Boston Academy of Music, as a public institution, not as an association of individuals. In its fundamental idea, to make provisions for the musical education of the people, it is the institution, which is wanted, and on account of this idea, we give it our hearty support where we think it to be correct; we encouragingly reprove it where we think it employs wrong means; and urge it on to greater activity and extension in the right path, where we think more might be done. For however imperfectly as yet the fundamental idea may have been carried out, however unsatisfactorily as yet the correctness of the means may have been scrutinized or examined, if the foundation is only correct, we think it wrong to condemn the institution, or to thwart it in its march onwards; it will and must learn and profit by experience. Let us therefore not forget, in looking at the great work which is still to be achieved by the Academy, that which it has already accomplished. If there is danger, that the method of instruction employed takes life and spirit from the art, and makes it merely mechanical—and can we so positively assert this?—let us by instruction, writing and practical example counteract this evil tendency as much as is in our power, but let us remember that without the exertions of the Academy we should have comparatively but few ears to listen, but few minds prepared to appreciate or care for any taste in music. By thus taking so decided a stand in favor of the institution, it will not be supposed that we approve of all the measures of its government or officers; we shall continue frankly to consider and examine their movements with regard to the progress of the art, and state our conclusions, and make such suggestions, as in our humble opinion would promote its objects. Still less must it be supposed that on this ground we are opposed to the other musical institutions of this city and in particular to the Handel & Haydn Society, however much there may be thought to exist of rivalry between the two institutions. We do not see any point of rivalry, which need injure their musical interest, although we cannot deny that there is in one point some clashing of interest; but that has little to do with music. It is commercial, pecuniary interest; and how sincerely do we wish that there was a way, in which, to the benefit of the art, this interest, could be entirely separated from those institutions!

We have already more than once pointed out the difference in the

objects of the two institutions, which are so considerable, that they ought rather to coöperate and go hand in hand with each other, than oppose each other, each taking a distinct share of the great work as its own task, both together, however, comprising what is wanted, instruction and example. So their claims upon the public are also of a different nature. One calls upon the public spirit of the individual to promote a public good, while the other calls upon the individual amateur for his own benefit. For, as a late lecturer on music very truly observed, it is the duty of the musical amateur to make himself as much acquainted with the more prominent musical compositions, as his circumstances will admit. The best opportunity to do this is given by the Handel & Haydn Society and the Musical Institute, whose object it is to bring such music before the public in the best possible style. There is most certainly rivalry between these latter two institutions, because both societies have the same object and make the same appeal to the public, but even that cannot be to the disadvantage of the art, but must on the contrary further it, provided the contest for public favor is carried on by fair means.

We follow, therefore, the course of all these institutions with much interest ; they all have their sphere of usefulness ; they all have their influence upon the art ; but the sphere of the Academy of Music is the most extended, and its path the most difficult ; it most wants, therefore, the patient indulgence and the active advice and assistance of all lovers of the art.

#### THE TYROLESE SINGERS.

The family Rayner, of Tyrol, two brothers and two sisters, have been giving several concerts of vocal music in their national style.

They came here at a very unfavorable moment, when politics took up the attention of our whole population, and their first concert was to empty benches. But their audiences have increased in every succeeding concert, as we thought they would, for their singing furnishes a very pleasant recreation, and is at the same time in point of style correct enough to satisfy the higher demand of musical criticism.

The Tenor is the soul of the whole quartette—he has a very pleasant though not a strong voice, and sings well ; the Alto also is very good ; the Bass is a voice of good volume but lacks in flexibility, and his drawing from one tone to the other is in bad taste. They all blend however very well together.

We recommend them heartily to our musical public.